

Docket No.: 241499US2CONT

COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA 22313

RE: Application Serial No.: 10/660,527

Applicants: Tetsuro MOTOYAMA, et al.

Filing Date: September 12, 2003

For: METHOD AND SYSTEM FOR REMOTE

DIAGNOSTIC, CONTROL AND INFORMATION

COLLECTION BASED ON VARIOUS

COMMUNICATION MODES FOR SENDING MESSAGES TO A RESOURCE MANAGER

Group Art Unit: 2142

Examiner: PRIETO, BEATRIZ

SIR:

Attached hereto for filing are the following papers:

APPEAL BRIEF WITH APPENDICES

Our credit card payment form in the amount of \$500.00 is attached covering any required fees. In the event any variance exists between the amount enclosed and the Patent Office charges for filing the above-noted documents, including any fees required under 37 C.F.R 1.136 for any necessary Extension of Time to make the filing of the attached documents timely, please charge or credit the difference to our Deposit Account No. 15-0030. Further, if these papers are not considered timely filed, then a petition is hereby made under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 for the necessary extension of time. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.

Respectfully submitted,

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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT & TRADEMARK OFFICE

IN RE APPLICATION OF

TETSURO MOTOYAMA, ET AL. : EXAMINER: PRIETO, BEATRIZ

SERIAL NO: 10/660,527

FILED: SEPTEMBER 12, 2003 : GROUP ART UNIT: 2142

FOR: METHOD AND SYSTEM FOR REMOTE DIAGNOSTIC, CONTROL AND INFORMATION COLLECTION BASED ON VARIOUS COMMUNICATION MODES FOR SENDING MESSAGES TO A RESOURCE MANAGER

APPEAL BRIEF

COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA 22313

SIR:

Applicants appeal the outstanding Final Rejection of November 6, 2006, finally rejecting each of pending Claims 1-16.

I. REAL PARTY IN INTEREST

The above-noted application is assigned to Ricoh Company, Ltd., which is the real party in interest, having a place of business at Tokyo, Japan.

II. RELATED APPEALS AND INTERFERENCES

Applicants and Applicants' representative are not aware of any related appeals or interferences that will directly effect or be directly affected by or having a bearing on the 21 FC:1462 523.63 OF Board's decision in the pending appeal.

III. STATUS OF CLAIMS

Claims 1-16 are pending in this application and the rejection of each of Claims 1-16 is being appealed. No claims were cancelled, but Claims 13-16 were added during prosecution of this application.

IV. STATUS OF AMENDMENTS

A Request for Reconsideration was filed prior to the Final Rejection dated November 6, 2006. Accordingly, all previously filed Amendments have been considered by the Examiner and are reflected in the attached claims.

V. SUMMARY OF CLAIMED SUBJECT MATTER

Claim 1 sets forth a method of monitoring an image handling device communicatively coupled to the Internet. The method recited in Claim 1 is generally supported by Figures 1, 2, 5, 11, 12, 16, 17, and 25-28 and the description related thereto in the specification, e.g., pages 27 and 39-41.

In particular, Claim 1 recites <u>obtaining</u>, by a first monitoring computer over the Internet, device information of the image handling device, the device information including (1) status information obtained from sensors of the image handling device, and (2) a device identification of the image handling device, which finds supports, e.g., in Figure 11 (Internet 10 and first monitoring computer 502); Figure 12 (image handling device 602); Figure 25 (device identification and status information); page 27, lines 3-15 (device information sent from device 602 to first monitoring computer 502 over the Internet); and pages 39-40 (device information).

Further, Claim 1 recites storing, by the first monitoring computer, the obtained device information, which finds support, e.g., in Figure 11 (data 501); and page 26, lines 1-10.

Next, Claim 1 recites processing the stored device information by the first monitoring computer to generate a period usage report for the image handling device, wherein the period usage report is based on the status information obtained over a predetermined period of time, which finds support, e.g., in Figures 26 and 27 (period usage reports); page 19, lines 17-20; and page 22, lines 17-21.

In addition, Claim 1 recites <u>transmitting the usage report over the Internet from the</u> <u>first monitoring computer to a second monitoring computer</u>, which finds support, e.g., in Figure 11; and page 27, lines 18-21 (first monitoring computer 502 sends information to second monitoring computer 610 over the Internet); and page 40, line 20 to page 41, line 9.

Further, Claim 1 recites <u>receiving the usage report by the second monitoring</u> <u>computer</u>, which finds support, e.g., page 40, line 20 to page 41, line 9.

Finally, Claim 1 recites that the first monitoring computer is remote from the image handling device, and the first monitoring computer is the first computer to obtain the device information from the image handling device, which finds support, e.g., in Figure 11 (first monitoring computer 502 is remote from devices 524 and 534, which may be in Europe or Asia); and page 27, lines 3-15 (device information sent directly from image handling device to remote first monitoring computer over the Internet).

Independent Claim 5 sets forth a system for monitoring an image handling device communicatively coupled to the Internet, which generally find support in Figures 1, 2, 5, 11, 12, 16, 17, and 25-28 and the description related thereto in the specification, e.g., pages 27 and 39-41.

In particular, Claim 5 recites means for obtaining, by a first monitoring computer over the Internet, device information of the image handling device, the device information

including (1) status information obtained from sensors of the image handling device, and (2) a device identification of the image handling device. See Figure 11 (Internet 10 and first monitoring computer 502); Figure 12 (image handling device 602); Figure 25 (device identification and status information); page 27, lines 3-15 (device information sent from device 602 to first monitoring computer 502 over the Internet); and pages 39-40 (device information).

In addition, Claim 5 recites means for storing, by the first monitoring computer, the obtained device information. See Figure 11 (data 501); and page 26, lines 1-10.

Next, Claim 5 recites means for processing the stored device information by the first monitoring computer to generate a period usage report for the image handling device, wherein the period usage report is based on the status information obtained over a predetermined period of time. See Figures 26 and 27 (period usage reports); page 19, lines 17-20; and page 22, lines 17-21.

Claim 5 also recites means for transmitting the usage report over the Internet from the first monitoring computer to a second monitoring computer. See Figure 11; and page 27, lines 18-21 (first monitoring computer 502 sends information to second monitoring computer 610 over the Internet); and page 40, line 20 to page 41, line 9.

Further, Claim 5 recites means for receiving the usage report by the second monitoring computer. See page 40, line 20 to page 41, line 9.

Finally, Claim 5 recites that the first monitoring computer is remote from the image handling device, and the first monitoring computer is the first computer to obtain the device information from the image handling device. See Figure 11 (first monitoring computer 502 is remote from devices 524 and 534, which may be in Europe or Asia); and page 27, lines 3-15 (device information sent directly from image handling device to remote first monitoring computer over the Internet).

Independent Claim 9 sets forth a computer program product having a computer usable medium for monitoring an image handling device communicatively coupled to the Internet, which generally find support in Figures 1, 2, 5, 11, 12, 16, 17, and 25-28 and the description related thereto in the specification, e.g., pages 27 and 39-41.

In particular, Claim 9 recites <u>instructions for obtaining</u>, by a first monitoring computer over the Internet, device information of the image handling device, the device information including (1) status information obtained from sensors of the image handling device, and (2) a device identification of the image handling device. See Figure 11 (Internet 10 and first monitoring computer 502); Figure 12 (image handling device 602); Figure 25 (device identification and status information); page 27, lines 3-15 (device information sent from device 602 to first monitoring computer 502 over the Internet); and pages 39-40 (device information).

In addition, Claim 9 recites <u>instructions for storing</u>, by the first monitoring computer, the obtained device information. See Figure 11 (data 501); and page 26, lines 1-10.

Next, Claim 9 recites <u>instructions</u> for processing the stored device information by the first monitoring computer to generate a period usage report for the image handling device, wherein the period usage report is based on the status information obtained over a predetermined period of time. See Figures 26 and 27 (period usage reports); page 19, lines 17-20; and page 22, lines 17-21.

Claim 9 also recites <u>instructions for transmitting the usage report over the Internet</u> from the first monitoring computer to a second monitoring computer. See Figure 11; and page 27, lines 18-21 (first monitoring computer 502 sends information to second monitoring computer 610 over the Internet); and page 40, line 20 to page 41, line 9.

Further, Claim 9 recites <u>instructions for receiving the usage report by the second</u> monitoring computer. See page 40, line 20 to page 41, line 9.

Finally, Claim 9 recites that the first monitoring computer is remote from the image handling device, and the first monitoring computer is the first computer to obtain the device information from the image handling device. See Figure 11 (first monitoring computer 502 is remote from devices 524 and 534, which may be in Europe or Asia); and page 27, lines 3-15 (device information sent directly from image handling device to remote first monitoring computer over the Internet).

VI. GROUNDS OF REJECTION TO BE REVIEWED ON APPEAL

The grounds of rejection being appealed are as follows:

- (1) whether Claims 1-15 of U.S. Patent No. 5,544,289 to Motoyama (hereinafter "the '289 patent") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,935,262 to Barrett et al. (hereinafter "the '262 patent") renders obvious the subject matter of each of Claims 1 and 3 under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting;
- (2) whether the teachings of U.S. Patent No. 5,282,127 to Mii (hereinafter "the '127 patent") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,430,711 to Sekizawa (hereinafter "the '711 patent") render obvious the subject matter of Claims 1-3, 5-7, and 9-11 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a); and
- (3) whether the teachings of the '127 and '711 patents, further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,901,286 to <u>Danknick et al.</u> (hereinafter "the '286 patent") render obvious the subject matter of Claims 4, 8, and 12-15¹ under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

VII. <u>ARGUMENT</u>

Double-Patenting Rejection of Claims 1 and 3

Claim 1 is directed to a method of monitoring an image handling device communicatively coupled to the Internet, comprising: (1) obtaining, by a first monitoring

¹ Applicants note that the outstanding Office Action (and the previous Office Action) do not address dependent Claim 16, which was added in the Amendment filed March 31, 2006.

computer over the Internet, device information of the image handling device, the device information including status information obtained from sensors of the image handling device, and a device identification of the image handling device; (2) storing, by the first monitoring computer, the obtained device information; (3) processing the stored device information by the first monitoring computer to generate a period usage report for the image handling device, wherein the period usage report is based on the status information obtained over a predetermined period of time; (4) transmitting the usage report over the Internet from the first monitoring computer to a second monitoring computer; and (5) receiving the usage report by the second monitoring computer. Further, Claim 1 recites that the first monitoring computer is remote from the image handling device, and that the first monitoring computer is the first computer to obtain the device information from the image handling device.

Applicants respectfully traverse the double patenting rejection of Claims 1 and 3.

Claim 1 of the '289 patent is directed to a method, comprising: (1) storing semi-static state data in a business office device, the semi-static state data including data which may change infrequently over a life of the business office device; (2) initiating communication between the business office device and a computer, by the business office; (3) transmitting the semi-static state data from the business office device to the computer; and (4) receiving the semi-static state data by the computer.

However, Applicants respectfully submit that the '289 Claim 1 fails to recite the steps of obtaining status information from sensors of an image handling device and device identification of an image handling device, as recited in Claim 1. '289 Claim 1 refers only to semi-static data, which includes data which may change infrequently over a life of the business office device. Further, '289 Claim 1 fails to disclose processing the stored device information by the first monitoring device to generate a usage report of the image handling device, wherein the period usage report is based on the status information obtained for a

predetermined period of time. Further, '289 Claim 1 fails to recite transmitting the usage report over the Internet from a first monitoring computer to a second monitoring computer, and also fails to disclose that the first monitoring computer is remote from the image handling device and the first monitoring computer is the first computer to obtain the device information from the image handling device, as recited in Claim 1. Finally, '289 Claim 1 fails to recite that the first monitoring computer obtains the device information of the image handling device over the Internet, as recited in Claim 1.

Applicants respectfully submit that the '262 patent fails to remedy the deficiencies of the '289 patent, as discussed above. In particular, the '262 patent is directed to a network device which interfaces between a local area network and an image forming apparatus. As shown in Figure 1, the '262 patent discloses a printer 102 that has a network expansion device (NED) 1001 directly attached to the printer 102. As shown in Figure 6, the NED includes 8-bit microprocessor 173, flash EPROM 174, and DRAM 175. Further, the '262 patent discloses that the NED 1001 can transfer information about the printer status to a local area network.

However, Applicants respectfully submit that the '262 patent fails to disclose the step of obtaining, by a first monitoring computer over the Internet, device information of the image handling device, the device information including status information obtained from sensors of the image handling device and a device identification of the image handling device. Rather, the '262 patent discloses that the NED is directly attached to the printer.

Moreover, Applicants respectfully submit that the '262 patent fails to disclose communication over the Internet, as recited in Claim 1. The '262 patent fails to disclose processing the stored device information by the first monitoring computer to generate a period usage report for the image handling device, wherein the period usage report is based on the status information obtained over a predetermined period of time, as recited in Claim 1.

In this regard, Applicants note that pages 7 and 8 of the Office Action dated May 30, 2006, which the outstanding Office Action incorporates by reference, state that the '262 patent discloses image handling devices that are configured to transmit electronic images over the Internet and that "Barrett's illustrated system does [not] seem to exclude what is defined as the 'Internet' to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made." However, Applicants respectfully submit that the '262 patent does not specifically use the term "Internet". Moreover, the Office Action must show that the '262 patent discloses the step of obtaining, by a first monitoring computer over the Internet, device information of the image handling device, as recited in Claim 1, and not merely that the '262 system does not exclude the use of the Internet. Moreover, Applicants respectfully submit that the '262 patent does not disclose that the first monitoring computer is remote from the image handling device, the first monitoring computer is the first computer to obtain the device information from the image handling device, and that the first monitoring computer obtains the device information over the Internet, as required by Claim 1.

Accordingly, no matter how the '289 claims and the teachings of the '262 patent are combined, the combination does not teach or suggest all the limitations recited in Claim 1. In particular, the suggested combination does not teach or suggest a first monitoring computer that is remote from an image handling device, wherein the first monitoring computer is the first computer to obtain the device information from the image handling device over the Internet. Further, the combination of the '289 claims and the '262 patent fails to disclose obtaining, by a first monitoring computer over the Internet, device information of the image handling device, and transmitting a usage report over the Internet from the first monitoring computer to a second monitoring computer. Accordingly, for the reasons stated above,

² Office Action dated May 30, 2006, page 8.

Applicants respectfully traverse the obviousness-type double patenting rejection of Claims 1 and 3.

Prior Art Rejections of Claims 1-16

Claim 1 is directed to a method of monitoring an image handling device communicatively coupled to the Internet, comprising: (1) obtaining, by a first monitoring computer over the Internet, device information of the image handling device, the device information including status information obtained from sensors of the image handling device, and a device identification of the image handling device; (2) storing, by the first monitoring computer, the obtained device information; (3) processing the stored device information by the first monitoring computer to generate a period usage report for the image handling device, wherein the period usage report is based on the status information obtained over a predetermined period of time; (4) transmitting the usage report over the Internet from the first monitoring computer to a second monitoring computer; and (5) receiving the usage report by the second monitoring computer. Further, Claim 1 recites that the first monitoring computer is remote from the image handling device, and that the first monitoring computer is the first computer to obtain the device information from the image handling device.

Regarding the rejection of Claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 103, the Office Action asserts that the '127 patent discloses everything in Claim 1 with the exception of transmitting information to a second monitoring computer over the Internet, and relies on the '711 patent to remedy that deficiency.

The '127 patent is directed to a centralized control system for a plurality of terminal devices (copy machines), comprising information collection means provided in each of the terminal devices for collecting information of the device status. Further, as shown in Figure 1, the '127 patent discloses that the copy machine transmits the status information to a

shown in Figure 1, the '127 patent discloses that the status information is communicated over a transmission line 5, and a communication line 6, which is a private line "including a public telephone line, lease line or LAN (local area network)." However, Applicants respectfully submit that the '127 patent fails to disclose obtaining, by a first monitoring computer over the Internet, device information of the image handling device, the device information including status information obtained from sensors of the image handling device and a device identification of the image handling device, as recited in Claim 1. The '127 patent does not disclose that device information is obtained by a first monitoring computer over the Internet. In this regard, in the Response to Arguments section on pages 8 and 9 of the Office Action dated May 30, 2006, the Office Action appears to rely on the '711 patent as disclosing this limitation. Accordingly, it appears to Applicants that the Office admits that the '127 patent does not disclose the step of obtaining, by a first monitoring computer over the Internet, device information of the image handling device. Rather, the Office is relying on the '711 patent to disclose that limitation.

The '711 patent is directed to a system and method for monitoring the state of a plurality of machines connected via a computer network. As shown in Figure 1, the '711 patent discloses that printers connected in a local area network send status information to an agent 10, which in turn sends an e-mail to the console unit 20. As noted on page 9 of the Office Action dated May 30, 2006, the '711 patent also discloses that:

[i]n the first-type area 2a, the LAN 3a connects a plurality of network printers P, an agent unit 10, and a router 4 to each other. The router 4 connects the LAN 3a to a second-type computer network 6 set so as to cover a wider area (second-type area) 5 than the first-type area 2. In the embodiment, the Internet covering almost all the world is adopted as the second-

³ '127 patent, column 4, lines 47-48.

⁴ See page 9 of the Office Action dated May 30, 2006.

Applicants note that this appears to be in contradiction with the stated rejection of Claim 1 on pages 3 and 4 of the Office Action dated May 30, 2006.

type computer network 6. However, every type of computer network can be adopted as the second-type computer network 6 so long as the computer network provides terminal-to-terminal information transfer service through electronic mail and connects LANs.⁶

Thus, the '711 patent discloses that the printers are connected to a LAN, while the LAN is connected to the Internet or a similar type of network that connects LANs. However, Applicants respectfully submit that the '711 patent fails to disclose obtaining, by a first monitoring computer over the Internet, device information of the image handling device, the device information including status information obtained from sensors of the image handling device and a device identification of the image handling device, wherein the first monitoring computer is remote from the image handling device, and the first monitoring computer is the first computer to obtain the device information from the image handling device, as recited in Claim 1. Rather, the '711 patent discloses that the agent units 10 obtain the information from the printers over a local area network. The above cited passage from columns 18 and 19 of the '711 patent merely indicates that the second-type network can be the Internet or an equivalent network. However, this passage regarding the second-type computer network from the '711 patent is unrelated to the obtaining step recited in Claim 1 since the '711 patent discloses that the information is obtained from the network printers by a local area network prior to transmission over the Internet.

Thus, no matter how the teachings of the '127 and '711 patents are combined, the combination does not teach or suggest the obtaining step recited in Claim 1. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that a *prima facie* case of obviousness has not been established and the rejection of Claim 1 (and all similar rejected dependent claims) should be withdrawn.

⁶ '711 patent, column 18, line 63 to column 19, line 6.

Independent Claims 5 and 9 recite limitations analogous to the limitations recited in Claim 1. Accordingly, for reasons analogous to the reasons stated above for the patentability of Claim 1, Applicants respectfully submit that a *prima facie* case of obviousness has not been established and the rejections of Claims 5 and 9 (and all similar rejected dependent claims) should be withdrawn.

Regarding the rejection of dependent Claims 4, 8, and 12-15 under 35 U.S.C. § 103, Applicants respectfully submit that the '286 patent fails to remedy the deficiencies of the '127 and '711 patents, as discussed above. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that a *prima facie* case of obviousness has not been established and the rejections of Claims 4, 8, and 12-15 should be withdrawn.

Thus, it is respectfully submitted that independent Claims 1, 5, and 9 (and all associated dependent claims) patentably define over any proper combination of the '127, '711, and '286 patents.

VIII. CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that each of Claims 1-16 patentably distinguishes over the combination of teachings of the '127, '711, '262, '289, and '286 patents. Therefore, the outstanding rejections must be REVERSED.

Respectfully submitted,

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CLAIMS APPENDIX

1. (Rejected) A method of monitoring an image handling device communicatively coupled to the Internet, comprising:

obtaining, by a first monitoring computer over the Internet, device information of the image handling device, the device information including (1) status information obtained from sensors of the image handling device, and (2) a device identification of the image handling device;

storing, by the first monitoring computer, the obtained device information;

processing the stored device information by the first monitoring computer to generate a period usage report for the image handling device, wherein the period usage report is based on the status information obtained over a predetermined period of time;

transmitting the usage report over the Internet from the first monitoring computer to a second monitoring computer; and

receiving the usage report by the second monitoring computer,

wherein the first monitoring computer is remote from the image handling device, and the first monitoring computer is the first computer to obtain the device information from the image handling device.

- 2. (Rejected) The method of claim 1, wherein the transmitting step comprises: transmitting the usage report to the second monitoring computer at a predetermined time or upon the occurrence of a predetermined event.
- 3. (Rejected) The method of claim 1, wherein the image handling device is a copier, and the usage report includes a number of copies made by the copier over the predetermined period.

- 4. (Rejected) The method of claim 1, further comprising: translating the usage report into HTML or Excel format.
- 5. (Rejected) A system for monitoring an image handling device communicatively coupled to the Internet, comprising:

means for obtaining, by a first monitoring computer over the Internet, device information of the image handling device, the device information including (1) status information obtained from sensors of the image handling device, and (2) a device identification of the image handling device;

means for storing, by the first monitoring computer, the obtained device information; means for processing the stored device information by the first monitoring computer to generate a period usage report for the image handling device, wherein the period usage report is based on the status information obtained over a predetermined period of time;

means for transmitting the usage report over the Internet from the first monitoring computer to a second monitoring computer; and

means for receiving the usage report by the second monitoring computer,
wherein the first monitoring computer is remote from the image handling device, and
the first monitoring computer is the first computer to obtain the device information from the
image handling device.

6. (Rejected) The system of claim 5, wherein the means for transmitting comprises:

means for transmitting the usage report to the second monitoring computer at a

predetermined time or upon the occurrence of a predetermined event.

- 7. (Rejected) The system of claim 5, wherein the means for processing comprises:

 means for generating a usage report for a copier, the usage report including a number of copies made by the copier over the predetermined period.
 - 8. (Rejected) The system of claim 5, further comprising: means for translating the usage report into HTML or Excel format.
- 9. (Rejected) A computer program product having a computer usable medium for monitoring an image handling device communicatively coupled to the Internet, comprising:

instructions for obtaining, by a first monitoring computer over the Internet, device information of the image handling device, the device information including (1) status information obtained from sensors of the image handling device, and (2) a device identification of the image handling device;

instructions for storing, by the first monitoring computer, the obtained device information;

instructions for processing by the first monitoring computer the stored device information to generate a period usage report for the image handling device, wherein the period usage report is based on the status information obtained over a predetermined period of time;

instructions for transmitting the usage report over the Internet from the first monitoring computer to a second monitoring computer; and

instructions for receiving the usage report by the second monitoring computer,

wherein the first monitoring computer is remote from the image handling device, and the first monitoring computer is the first computer to obtain the device information from the image handling device. 10. (Rejected) The computer program product of claim 9, wherein the instructions for transmitting comprise:

instructions for transmitting the usage report to the second monitoring computer at a predetermined time or upon the occurrence of a predetermined event.

- 11. (Rejected) The computer program product of claim 9, wherein the image handling device is a copier, and the usage report includes a number of copies made by the copier over the predetermined period.
 - 12. (Rejected) The computer program product of claim 9, further comprising: instructions for translating the usage report into HTML or Excel format.
- 13. (Rejected) The method of claim 1, wherein the processing step comprises:

 processing the stored device information to generate the period usage report on one of a monthly and a weekly basis.
- 14. (Rejected) The system of claim 5, wherein the means for processing comprises:
 means for processing the stored device information to generate the period usage report
 on one of a monthly and a weekly basis.
- 15. (Rejected) The computer program product of claim 9, wherein the processing step comprises:

processing the stored device information to generate the period usage report on one of a monthly and a weekly basis.

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16. (Rejected) The method of claim 1, wherein the second monitoring computer and the image handling device are arranged in a same local area network.

EVIDENCE APPENDIX

None

RELATED PROCEEDING APPENDIX

None